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ABSTRACT

This presentation is designed to be part of a unit of study on the Middle East for sixth-grade students. The presentation is combined with independent and group research covering the people, geography, history, and economies of the countries of the Middle East. The presentation explains that Israel is a unique country in the Middle Eastern region because of the presence of three major religions: Judaism, Muslim, and Christian, and because of its high population of non-Arabs. The lesson focuses mainly on the city of Jerusalem because it has historically been the major city of the Holy Land. Although there are many historical sites throughout Israel, Jerusalem offers a more complete coverage of the major historical periods from about 3000 BCE to the present time. The presentation points out that Israel is a tiny piece of land with over 100 different ethnic groups living together. (BT)

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# *AN HISTORICAL LOOK AT ISRAEL*

Fulbright-Hays Seminar Abroad Program
Israel/Jordan
Summer 1998

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Submitted by

Barbara Walker

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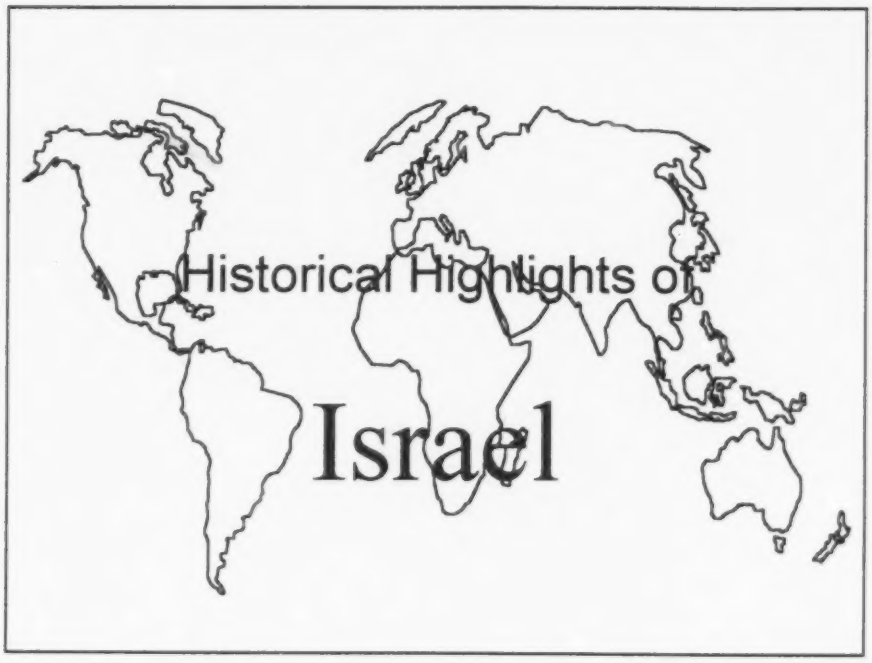
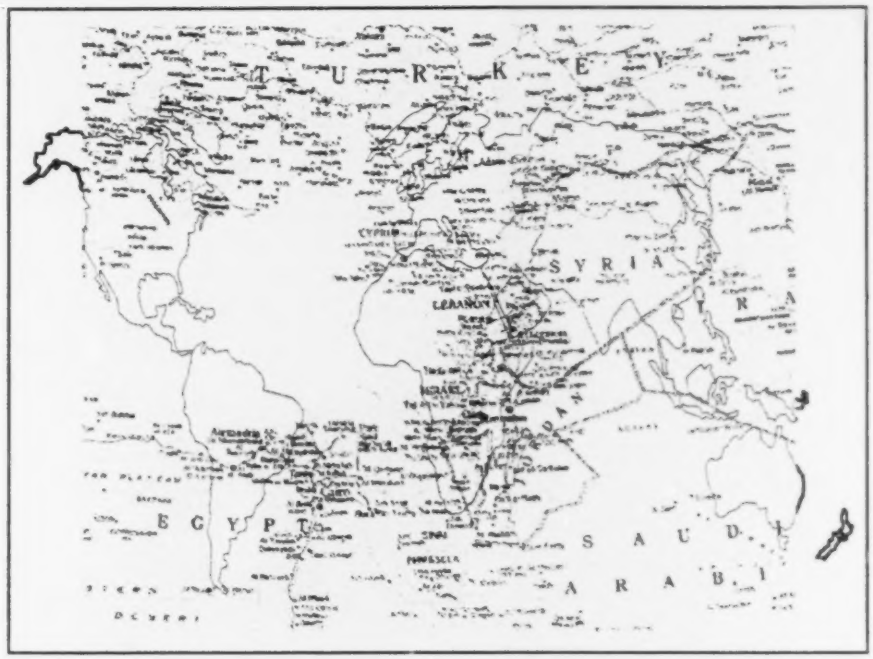
The following PowePoint presentation is designed to be part of a study of the Middle East with sixth grade students. It will be combined with independent and group research covering the people, geography, history, and economies of the countries of the Middle East.

Israel is a unique middle eastern country because of its importance to three major religions: Jewish, Muslim, and Christian. It is also unique because of its high population of non-Arabs.

This presentation focuses mainly on Jerusalem because it has historically been the major city of the Holy Land. Although there are many historical sites throughout Israel, Jerusalem offers a more complete coverage of the major historical periods from about 3000 BCE to the present time.


Historical Highlights of
Israel

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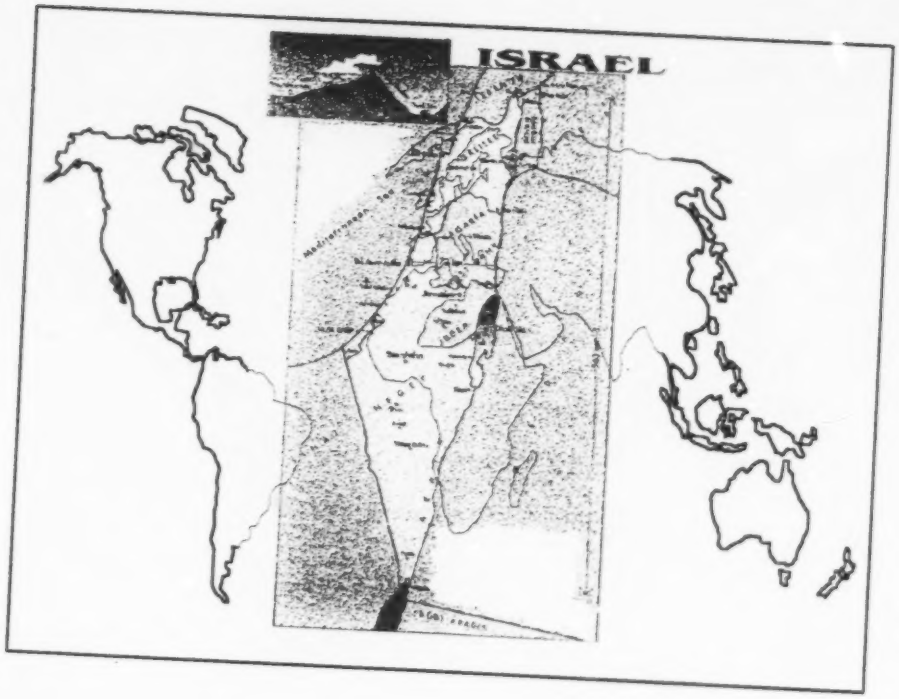


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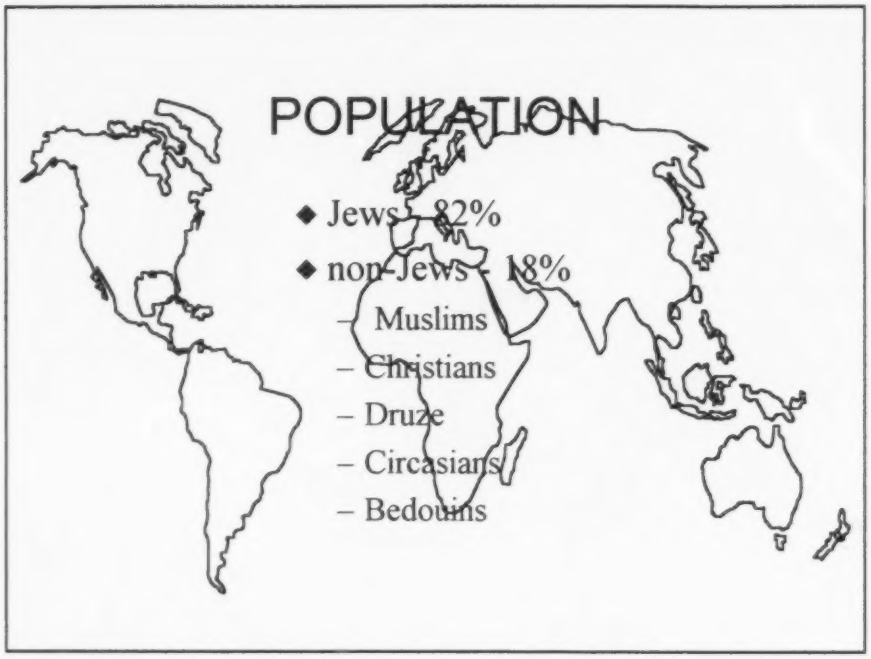


To the east, beyond the Mediterranean Sea, past Africa lies Israel -- a land that is both antique and modern. It is antique because it is here where the sunrise of civilization began, where King David built his kingdom, and Jesus carried out his mission. The history of this land (known as the Holy Land) goes back 5000 years. Yet it is new because the state of Israel is only 50 years old.

The length of Israel is 248 miles. Its width varies from 8 miles at the Gulf of Eilat on the Red Sea to 68 miles across its middle. Half of Israel is desert.

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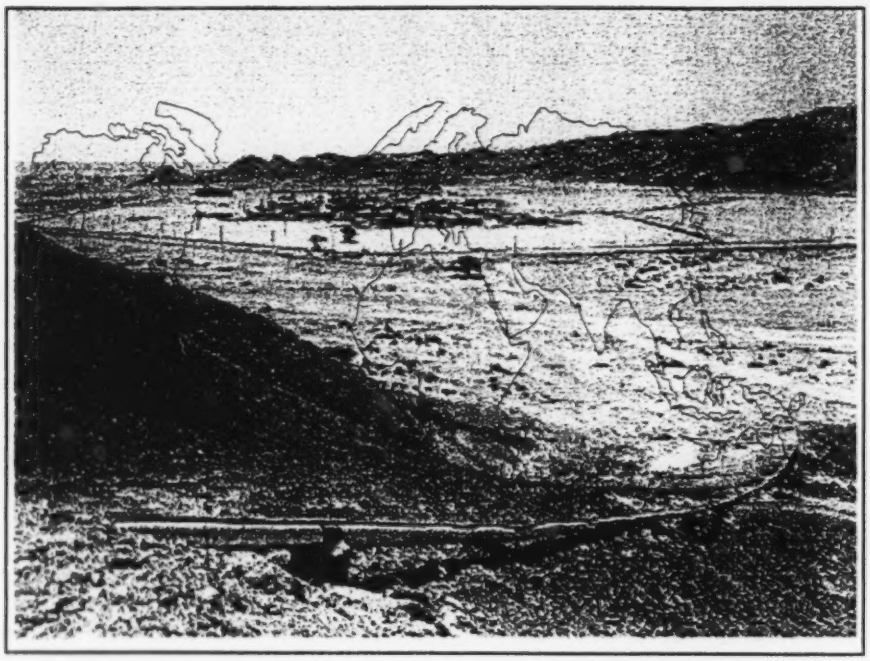
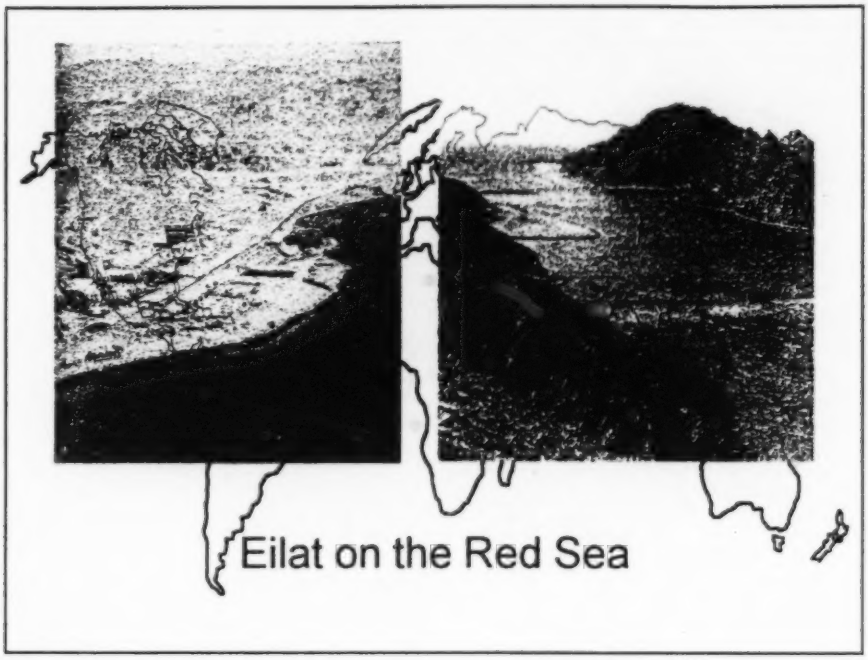
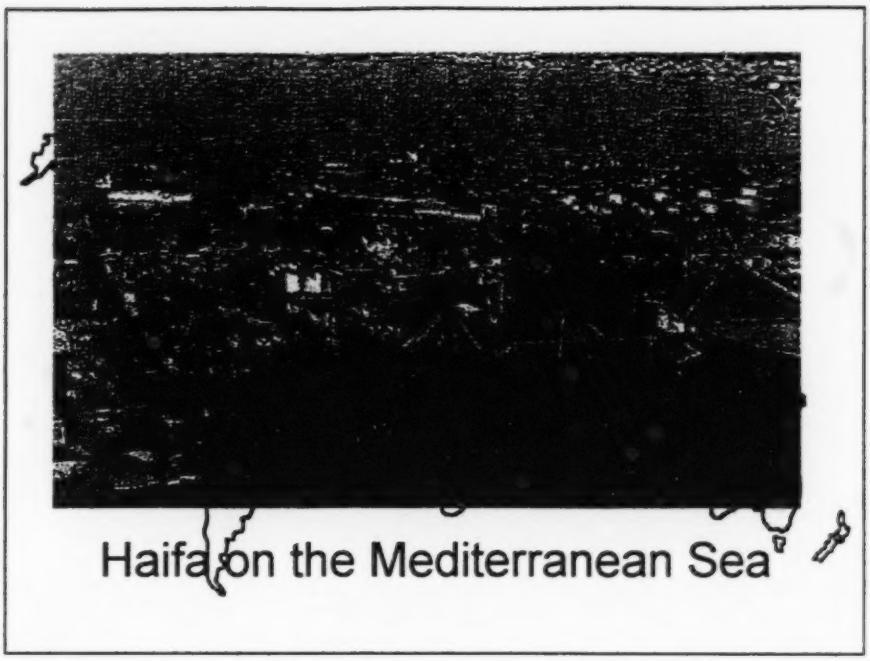


From the desert sands

(where determined farmers of the kibbutz revolutionized the landscape of large areas of the Negev Desert, bringing in water where it did not exist and thus permitting the existence of modern agriculture.)




to the ocean gulf




to the Mediterranean Sea,

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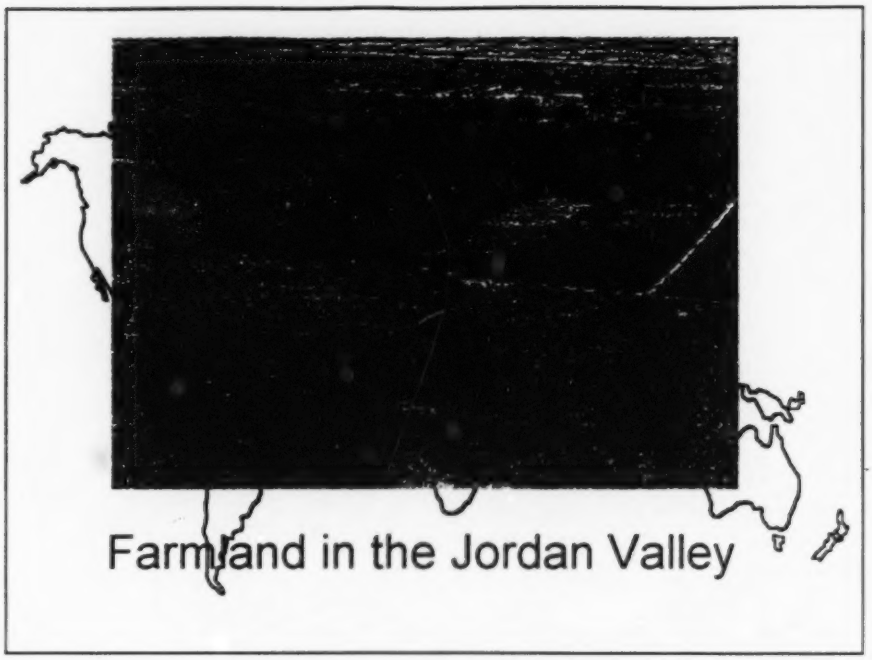
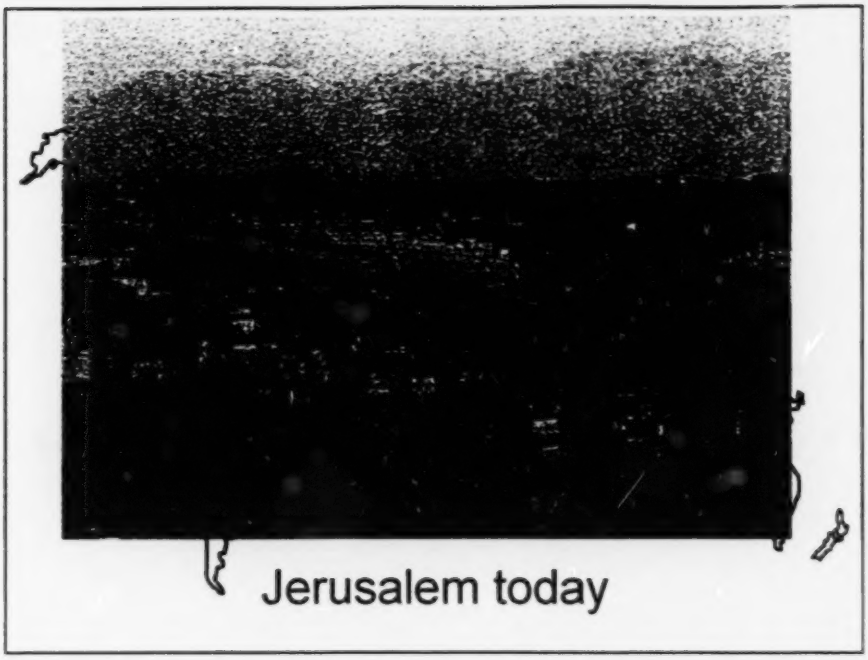
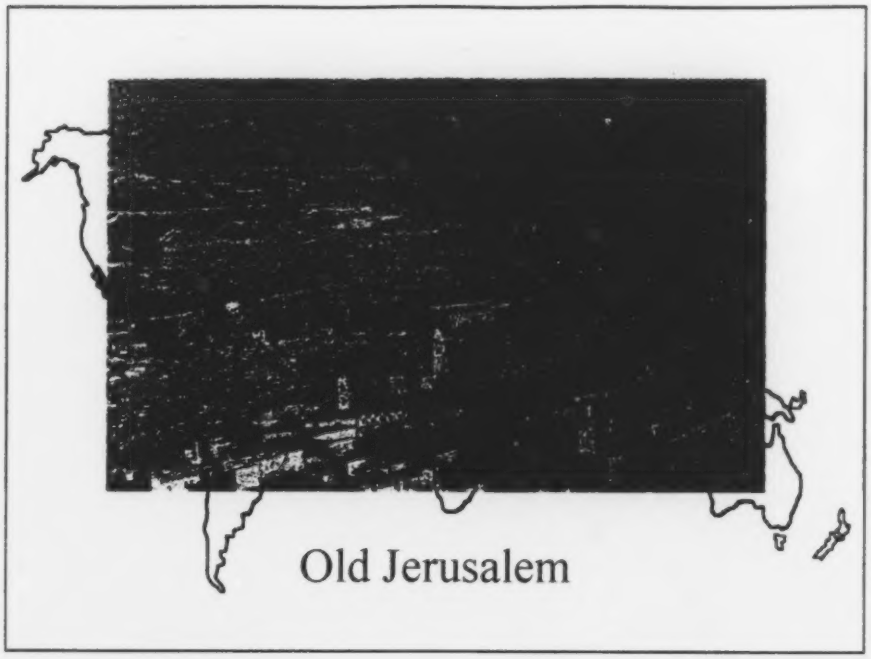



to the fertile lands, reminders of these 5000 years past are everywhere.



Jerusalem today

- Let's begin our historical journey of Israel in Jerusalem, the capital of Israel.




The present "Old City" forms a very small part of all Jerusalem today. The Old City is walled and is approximately one square kilometer in area. it is historically important to the Jews, the Muslims, and Christians.

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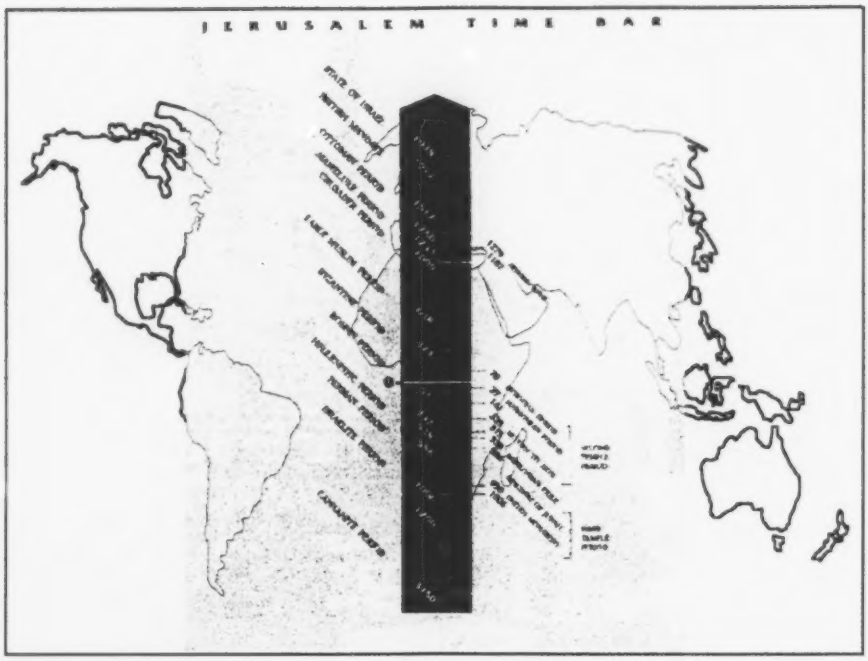
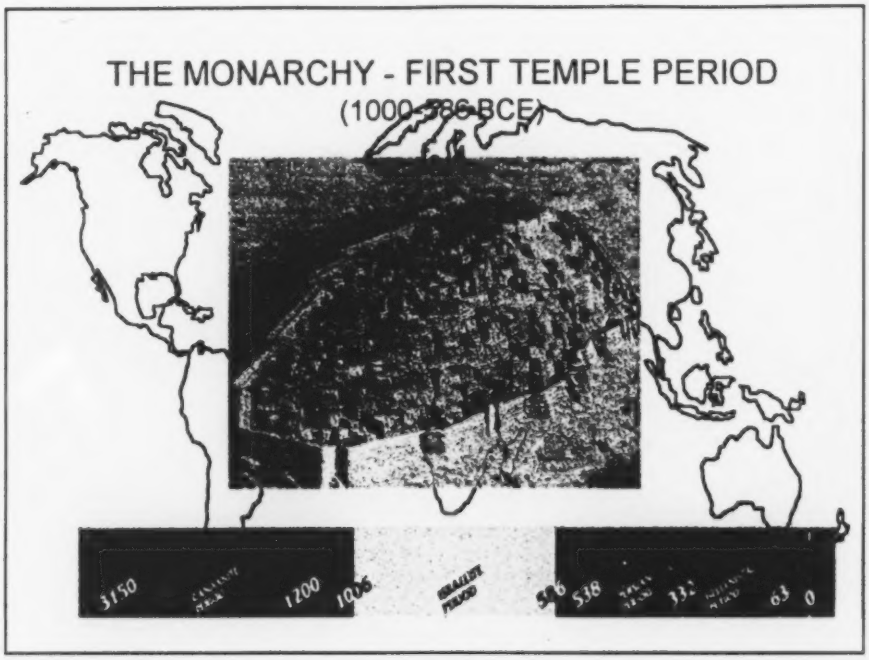



This time bar shows the different time periods of Israel and Jerusalem, its capital.

This time bar goes from the earliest known time of the Canaanite Period beginning about 3150 BCE to the State of Israel which began in 1948.

Although not a lot is known of the Canaanite Period, the earliest mention of Jerusalem is on Egyptian figurines from the 19th century BCE. In the 14th century BCE letters sent to and from the royal palace in Egypt describe the prominence of Jerusalem and its king in central Canaan.




During the Israelite Period (1000 - 586 BCE) the city of Jerusalem might have looked like this.

During this almost 500-year period, King David conquered the city and Jerusalem acquired the national status as the capital of the Jewish people.

David's son, King Solomon, built the first Temple (POINT TO THE AREA WHERE THIS WAS BUILT.)

Later King Hezekiah greatly expanded the city's boundaries to the west. He constructed a water supply system to bring water from the Gihon Spring outside the walls to the Siloam Pool inside. During this Israelite Period the city was attacked and destroyed many times.



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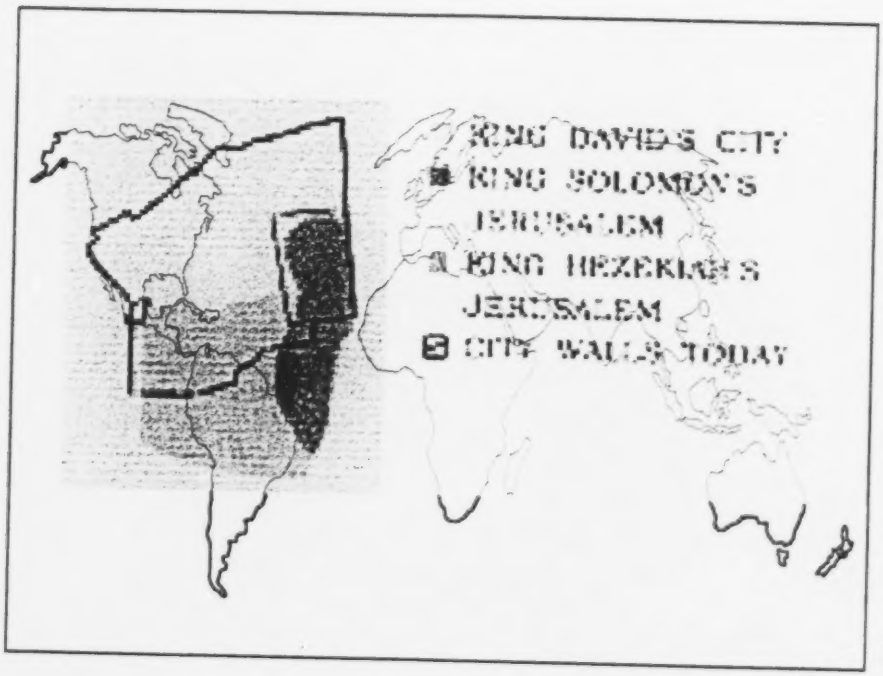


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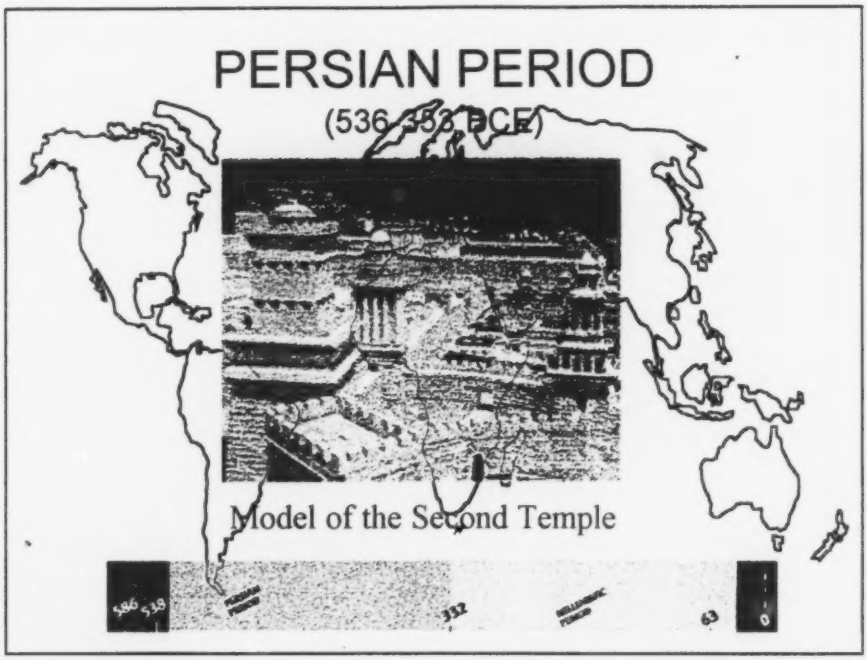


Between 536-353 BCE Jerusalem was part of the Persian Empire. When King Cyrus of Persia conquered this land from Babylonia, he allowed the exiles to return to Jerusalem. Under the leadership of Nehemiah, the Second Temple was built on the site of the First Temple. The city walls were rebuilt and the city was fortified.

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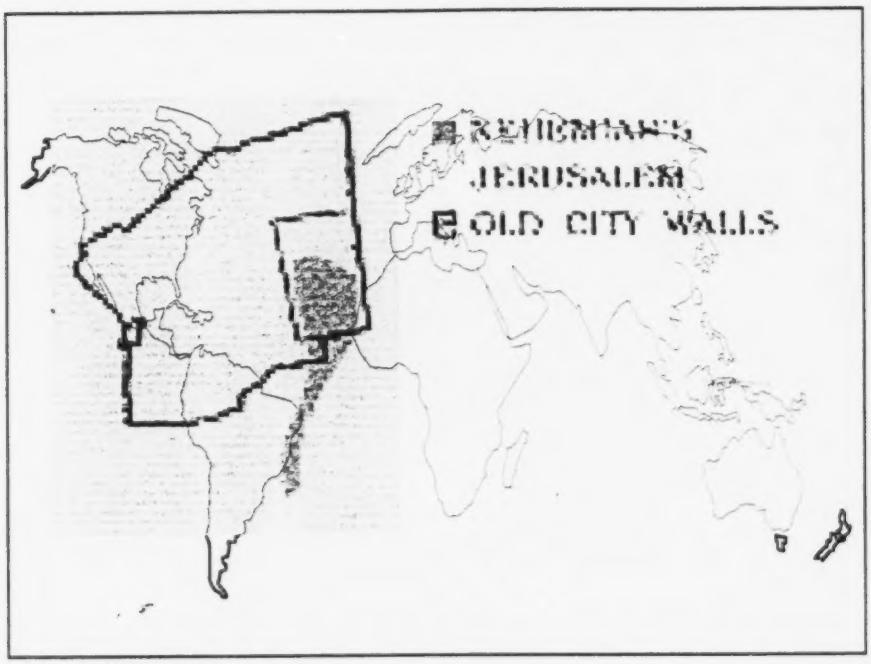


But as you can see, Jerusalem was actually reduced in size during the Persian Period.

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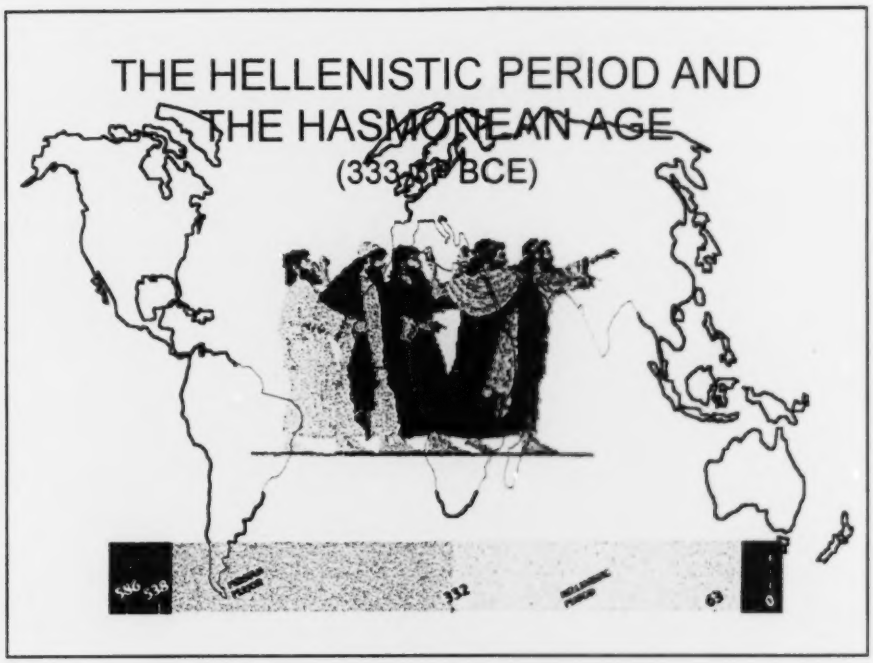


333-37 BCE is known as the Hellenistic Period and the Hasmonean Age.

In 333 BCE Alexander the Great conquered the Persian Empire. The Hellenistic culture, a blending of Greek and early eastern cultures, grew dominant.

During this time there was strong disagreement between the Hellenistic Jews (those who adopted customs and attitudes of the Hellenistic culture) and the traditionalist Jews.

Around 100 BCE Simeon the Maccabee defeated the Hellenistic Jews. Between 100-63 BCE Jerusalem expanded westward. Large scale buildings arose and the city was surrounded by a strong wall (later known as the First Wall.)



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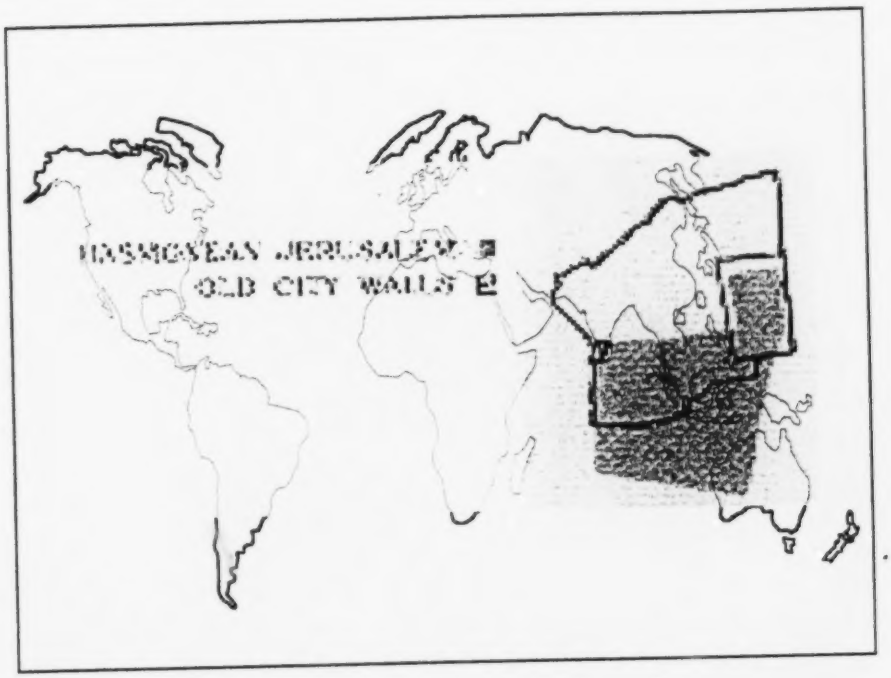


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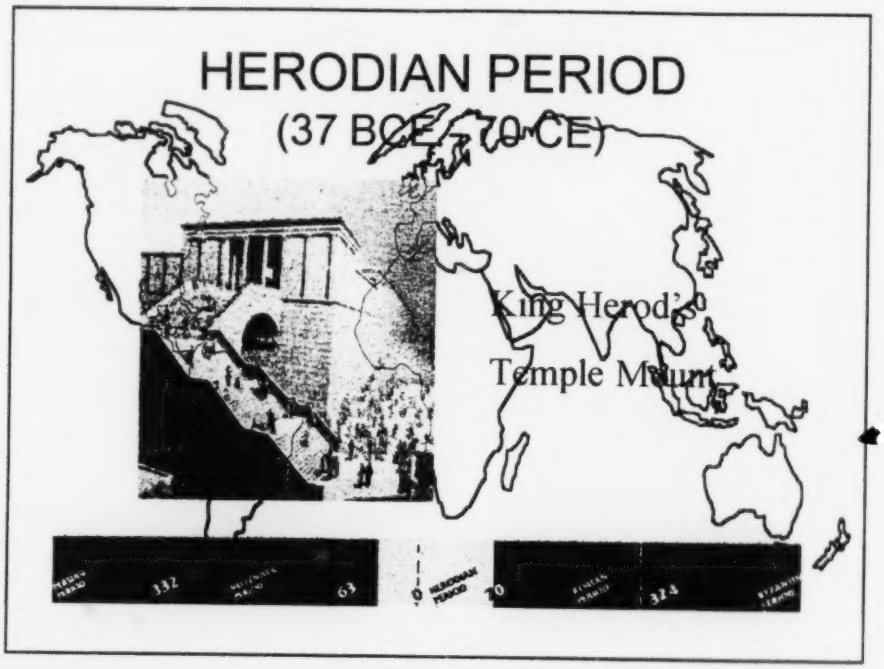


In 63 BCE Jerusalem was conquered by Roman forces.
King Herod reigned from 37-4 BCE and Jerusalem grew.

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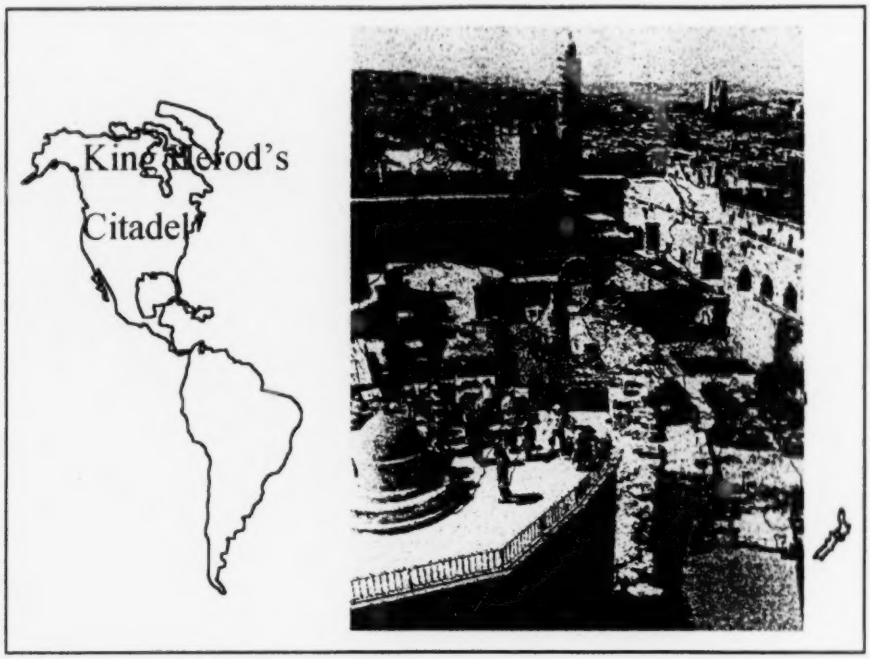


Herod's monumental building projects included the Second Wall, the Temple Mount, and the Citadel.

Numerous palaces, as well as public buildings, such as markets, a theater, and a hippodrome, enhanced the city.

In 70 CE Jerusalem fell to the Roman legions under the command of Titus. Jerusalem's buildings were put to the torch and its inhabitants exiled.

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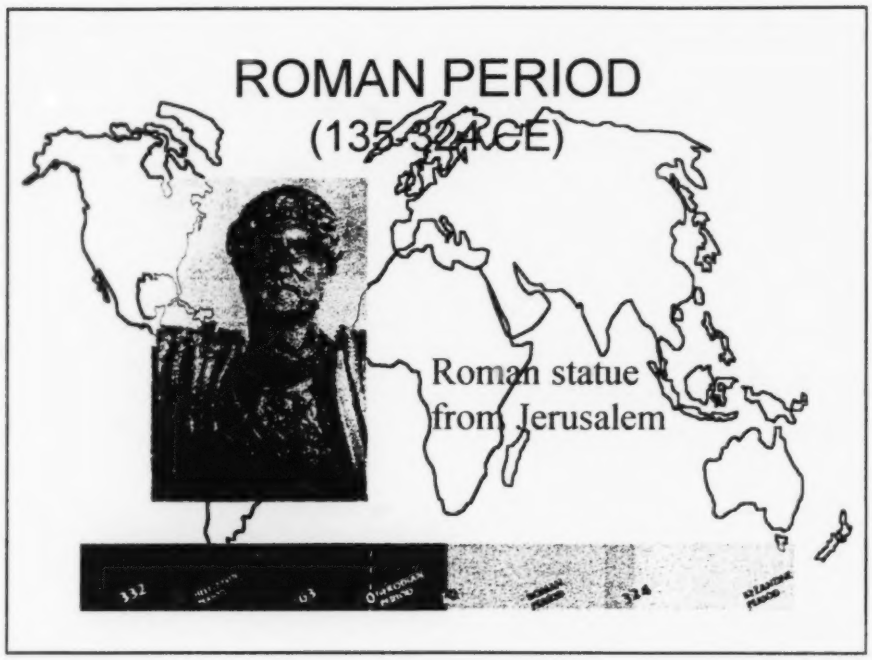
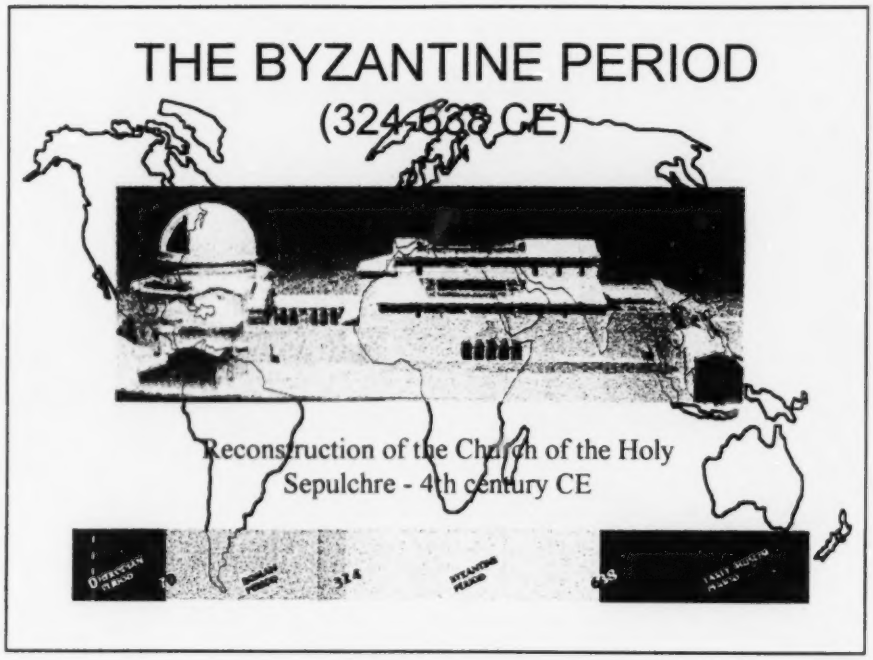



In 135 CE Roman Emperor Hadrian declared a new city on the site of Jerusalem, called Colonia Aelia Capitolina. During this late Roman Period, Jews were not permitted to enter and Christianity was a forbidden religion.




During the Byzantine Period (324-638 BCE) Christianity became the official religion. Churches were built on sites identified as sacred to Christianity. The city grew in size and population.

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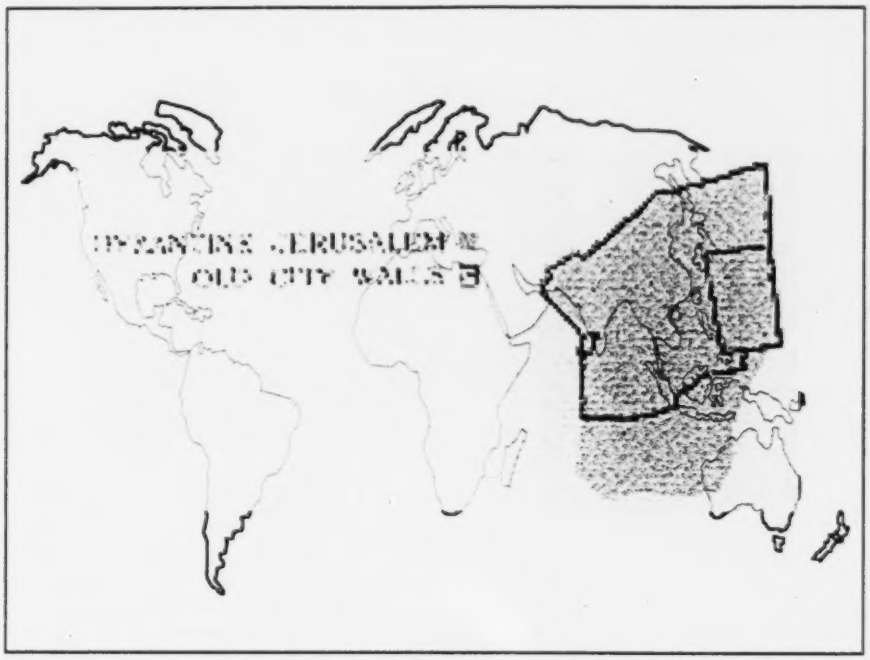
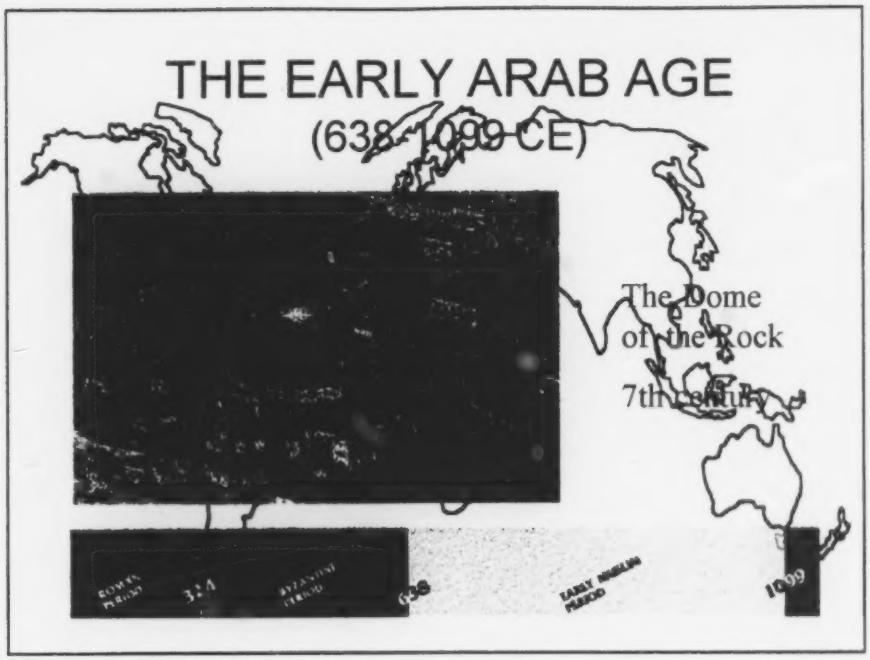
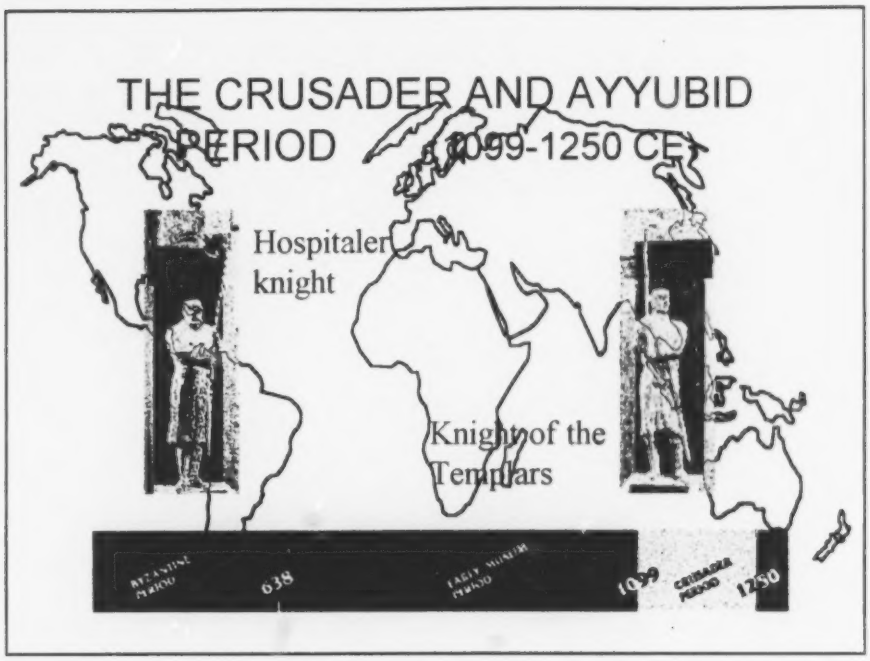


In 614 the country once again fell to the Persians. Many churches were destroyed and damaged. In 692 the Emperor Heraclius restored Byzantine rule. But in 638 Jerusalem surrendered again, this time to the Muslim Arabs.




The Arab conquest of Jerusalem was bloodless. Tradition has it that the Patriarch Sophronios surrendered the city to Omar, the commander of the Arab forces. In return the patriarch was granted a writ of privileges which guaranteed the right of Christians to maintain their holy places and pursue their customs unhindered. At the end of the 7th century Jerusalem was recognized as the third holiest city in Islam, after Mecca and Medina, and as a destination for pilgrimage. The Temple Mount was identified by Muslims as the place Muhammad reached in his Night Voyage and from which he ascended to heaven.




After a five-week siege, Jerusalem fell to the Crusaders on 15 July 1099. Muslims and Jews were massacred by Crusaders as they restored Jerusalem to Christian hands. Christian traditions were renewed, churches and monasteries were rebuilt.

The Muslims regained control of Jerusalem in 1187 when Jerusalem fell to Saladin, sultan of Egypt and Syria. Jews returned to Jerusalem.

During the Second Crusade in 1229 European Christians returned to Jerusalem. According to a treaty between Emperor Frederick II and the Sultan of Egypt, part of the city remained in Muslim hands while part of the city was given to the Christians.

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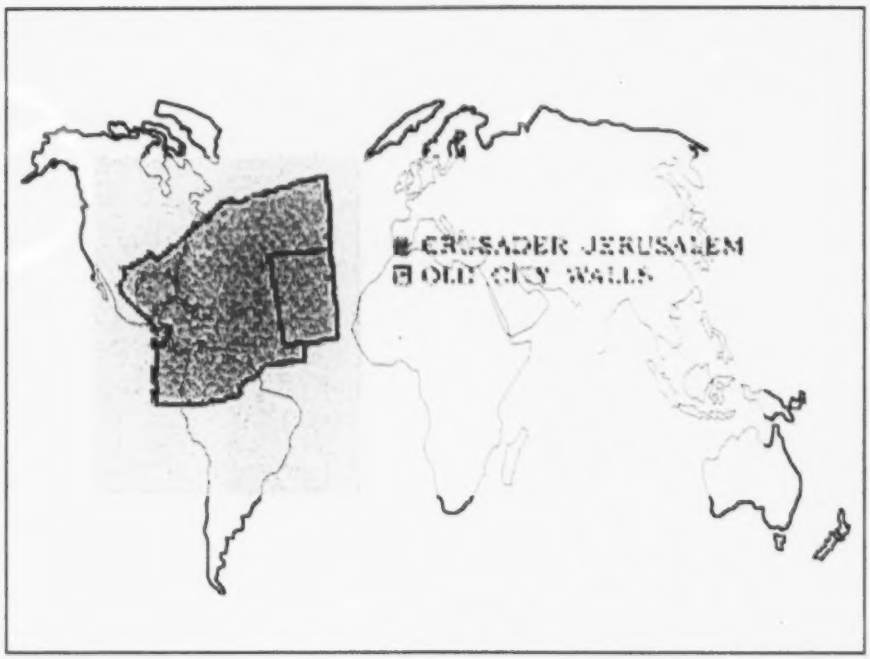
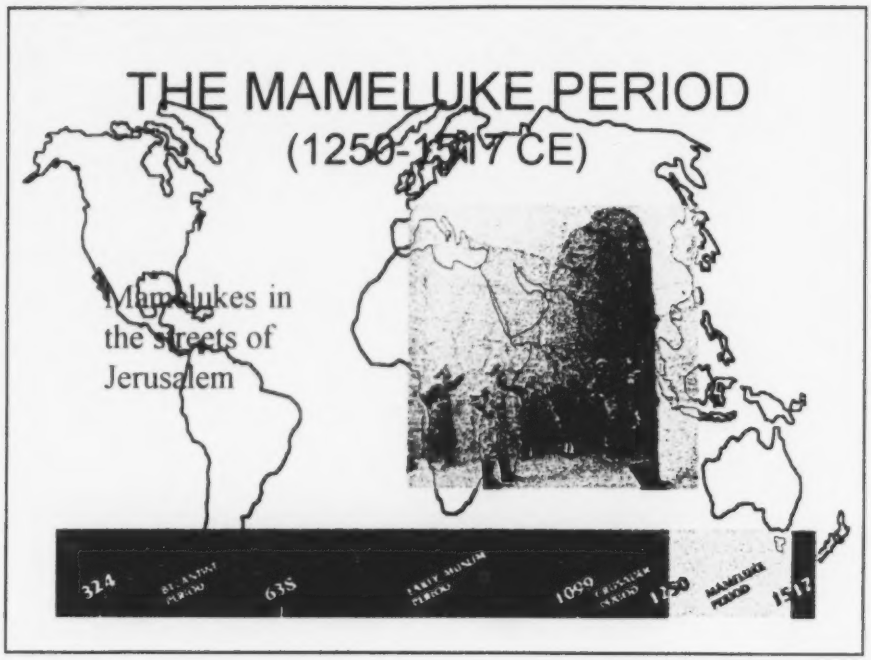



Jerusalem at the time of the Crusaders fit inside the city walls. Jerusalem remained this size from the Crusader period through the Ottoman period which ended in 1917.




In 1260 Palestine was conquered by the Mameluke rulers of Egypt. Mamelukes were soldiers brought from Egypt as property of the ruler from the Central Asian steppes.

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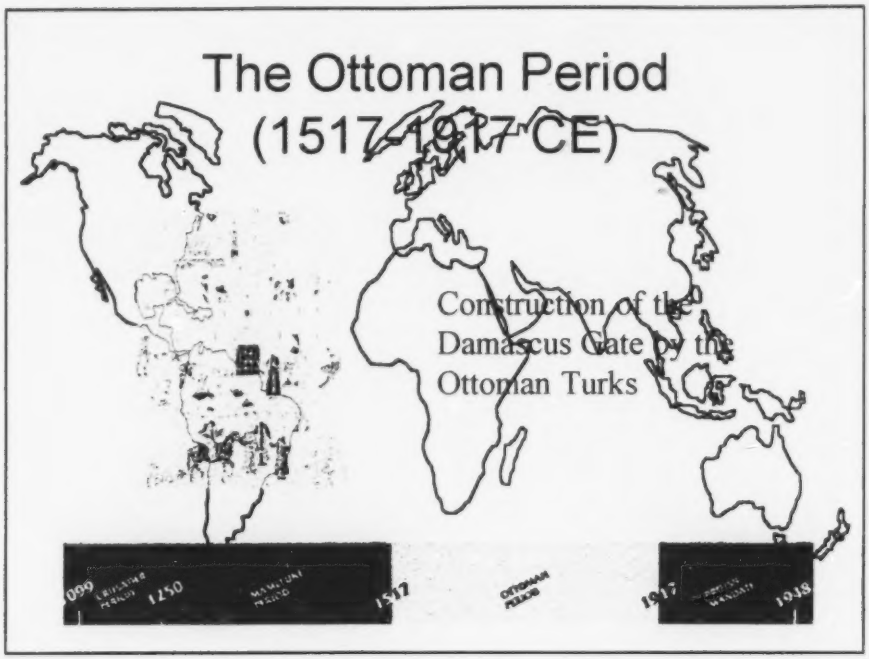


The Mameluke forces were defeated by the Ottoman Turks in 1517. Palestine came under the rule of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent and Jerusalem flourished. After Suleiman's death, Jerusalem became a small, unimportant town.

Over the next 300 years, trade and commerce were frozen and Jerusalem's population barely increased.

By the end of the Mameluke period the Jewish communities had grown.

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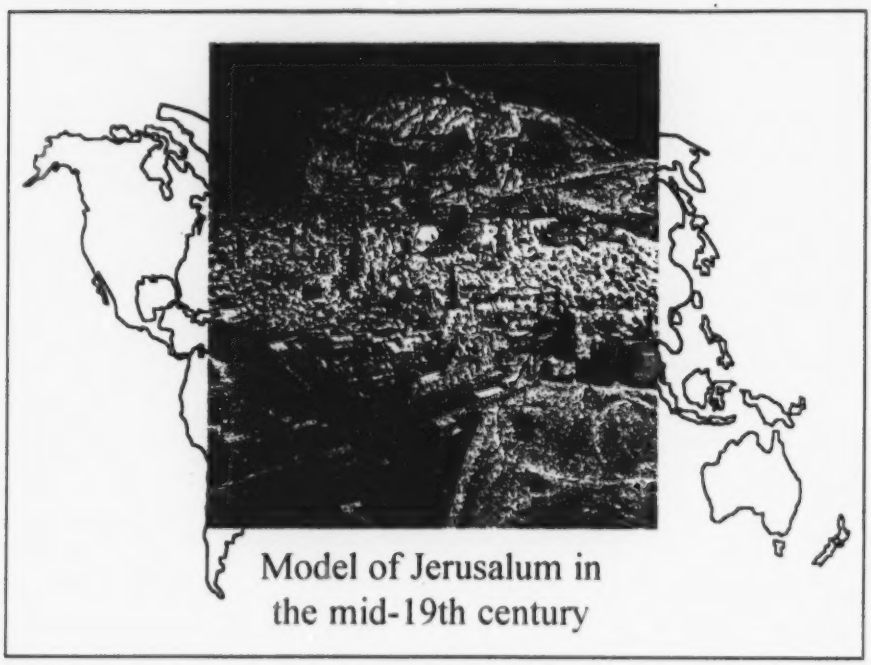


Model of Jerusalem in the mid 19th century

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On 9 December 1917, as World War I neared its end, Jerusalem surrendered to the British forces. This marked the end of Ottoman rule in the city which had lasted 400 years and the beginning of thirty years of British rule.

New Jerusalem expanded during this period. Arab and Jewish neighborhoods were built. Modernization intensified during this period.

The overriding issue of this period was the future of Palestine and Jerusalem. Tensions between Arabs and Jews erupted into riots in 1920 and 1929. These were followed by the Arab Revolt of 1936-39.

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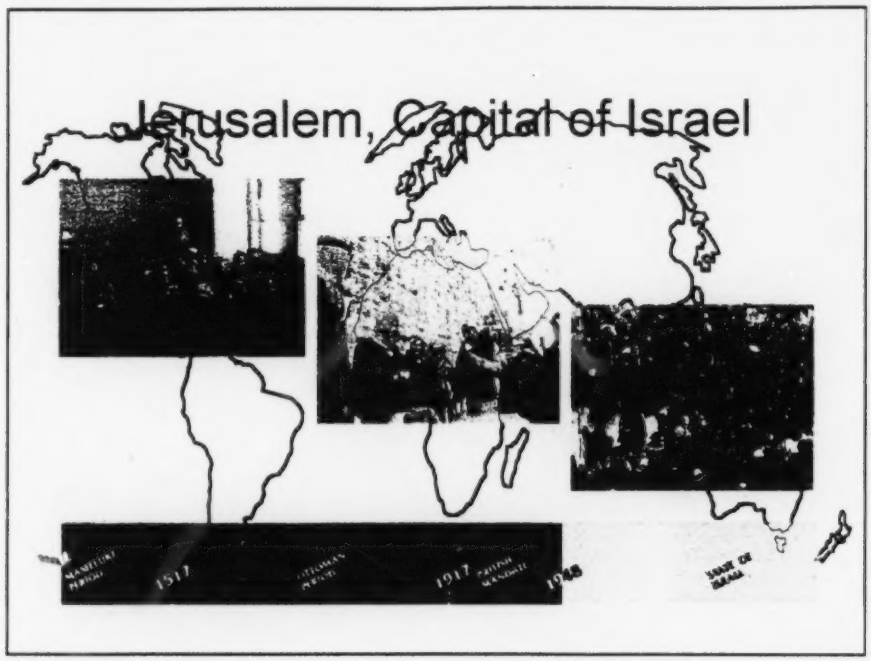


The State of Israel came into being on May 14, 1948 and Jerusalem was established as its capital. From the very first day of Israel's independent existence, the Arab world shunned the idea of a Jewish nation in the Middle East. The War of Independence which followed was the first of a series of armed conflicts involving Israel and the Arab World. The end of this war in 1949 left Jerusalem divided with a border running through the city and cutting neighborhoods, streets, and houses.

In June 1967 the barricade which separated the two parts of the city was removed. Jerusalem became a single city with Jews, Christians, and Muslims living side by side.

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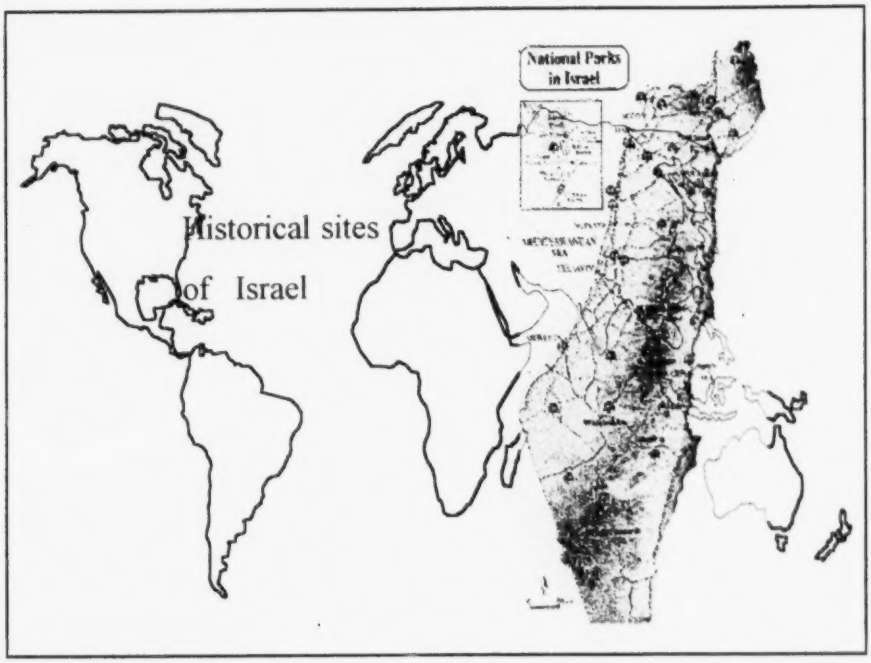


Our historical journey moves away from Jerusalem. As you can see by looking at this map of the National Parks in Israel, our journey through the history of Israel could be lengthy.

We will not visit all of these historical sites, but will look at only five of them.

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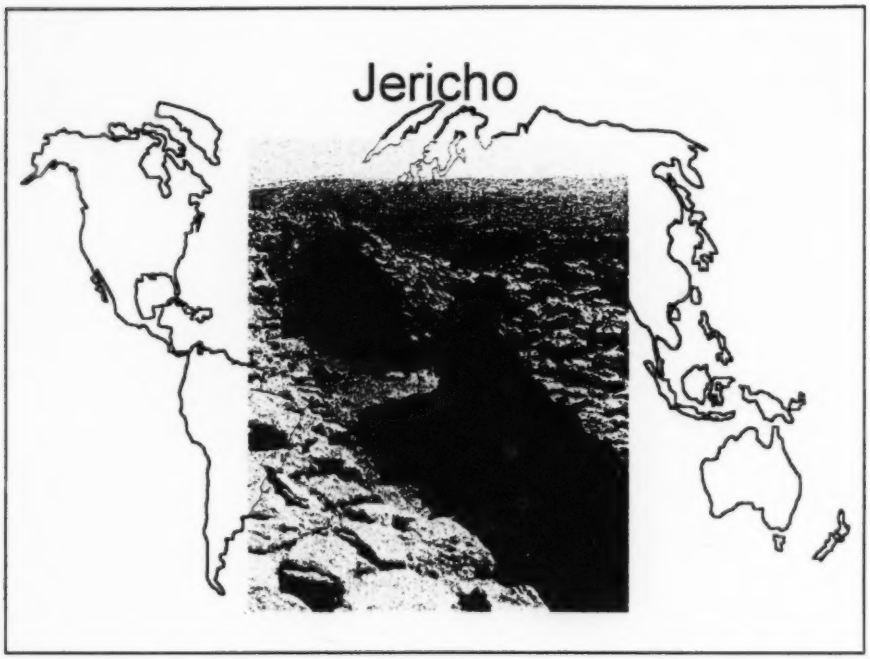
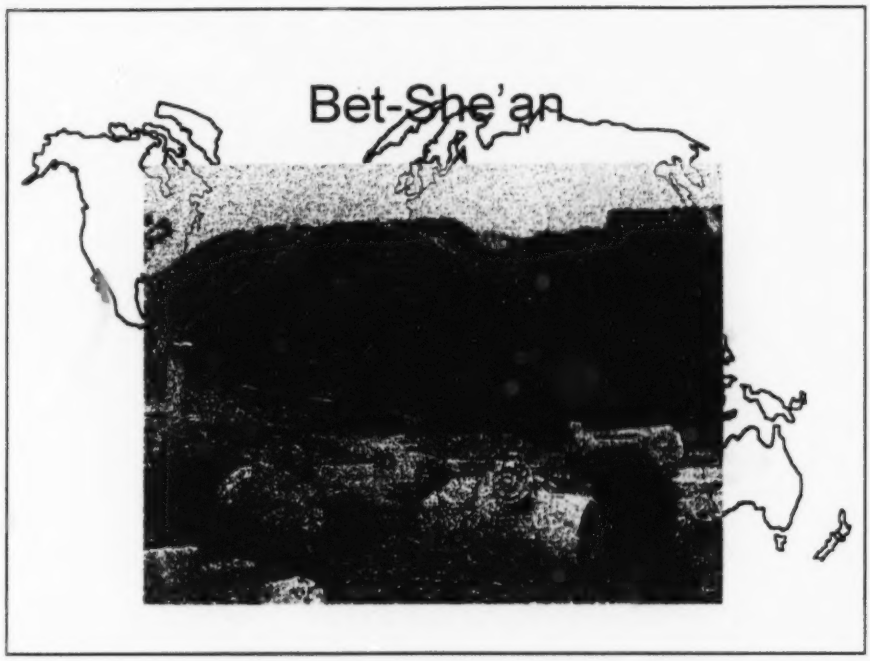



Jericho, just north of the Dead Sea, is estimated to be ten thousand years old. It may be the oldest city in the world.

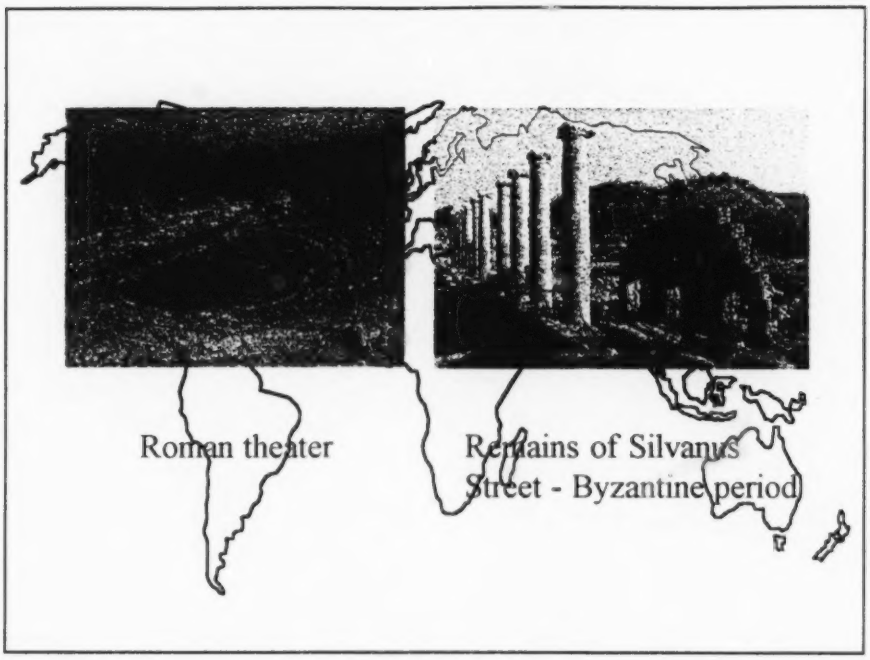
The excavations in Jericho have unearthed the remains of what is believed to be the oldest manmade building found. These ruins were probably built around 2200-2000 BCE. (about 7000 years old)




Bet She'an is located in the lush area of the Jordan Valley south of the Sea of Galilee.

The city was built on a rise between two streams which provided the rich soil and fresh water needed for settlement. What is seen here is a view of Tel Bet-She'an from the south.

A tell is a man-made mountain. In a place where there has been water and fertile soil, a new town would be built on top of a ruined one. When this town was destroyed another was built on top of it. This went on for thousands of years until a great mound was built. By cutting down through a tell we can find out about the culture of each period by the utensils, tools, and other artifacts that the people living then left behind.




The remains of some twenty layers of settlement have been found at Tell Bet She'an. It is believed that human habitation in this area goes as far back as the Neolithic period, 7000 years ago. Early excavations were carried out in the 1920's and 1930's. Most of the excavation has occurred since the late 1980's. What has been dug is the central part of the city, the residential areas have not yet been excavated.

This theater was built during the Roman period and was used, with repairs until the end of the Byzantine period (about 70-638 CE)

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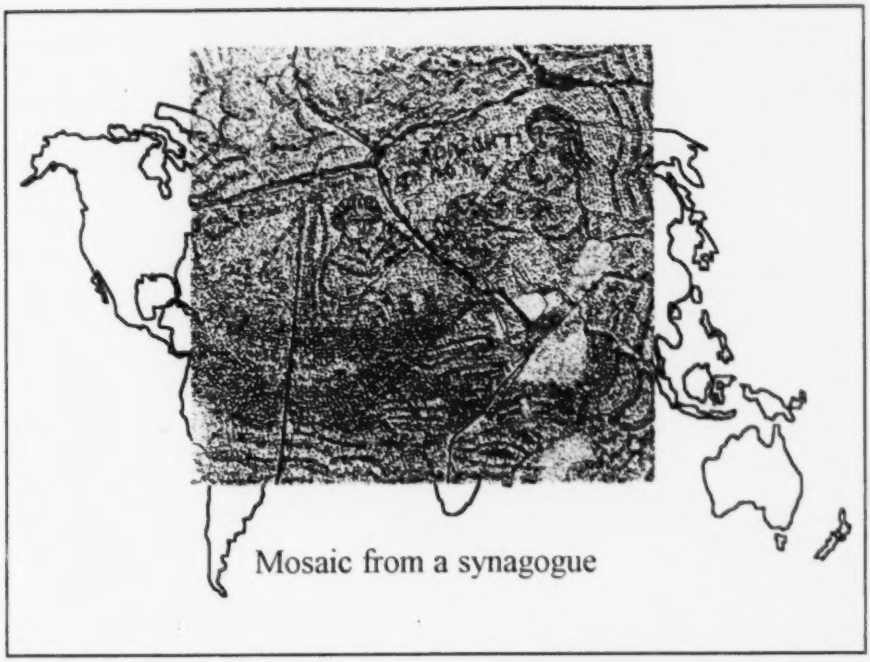
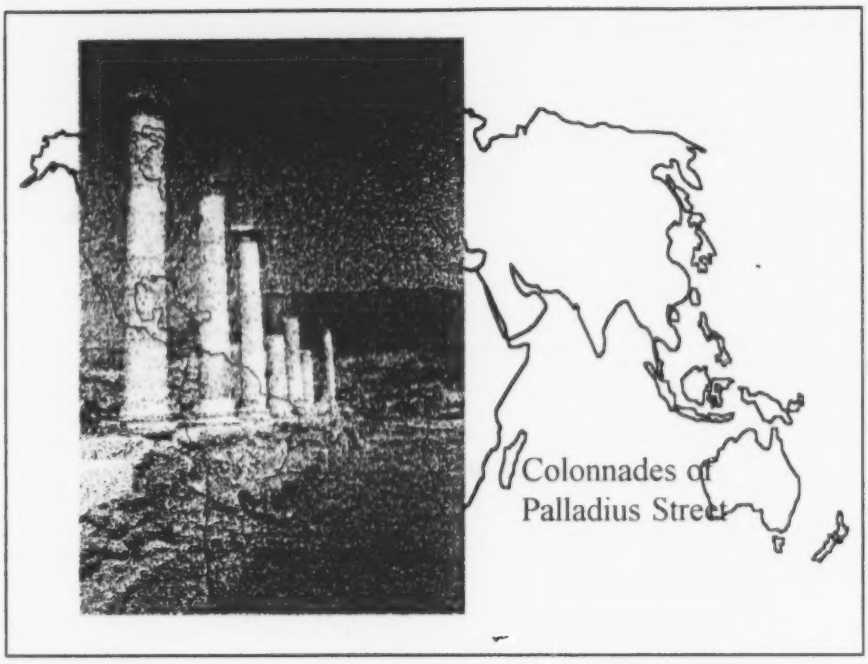



A Greek inscription in a Byzantine Mosaic (floor in Bet-She'an)




A view of the western colonnade of Palladius Street. It crossed the city center from the slopes of the Tel to the theater. The street was paved with basalt slabs in a herringbone pattern. Later it was repaved with marble slabs. There was a raised sidewalk along both sides of the street. A row of shops opened onto the street.

Much of the Roman and Byzantine structures were destroyed by an earthquake in 749 CE.

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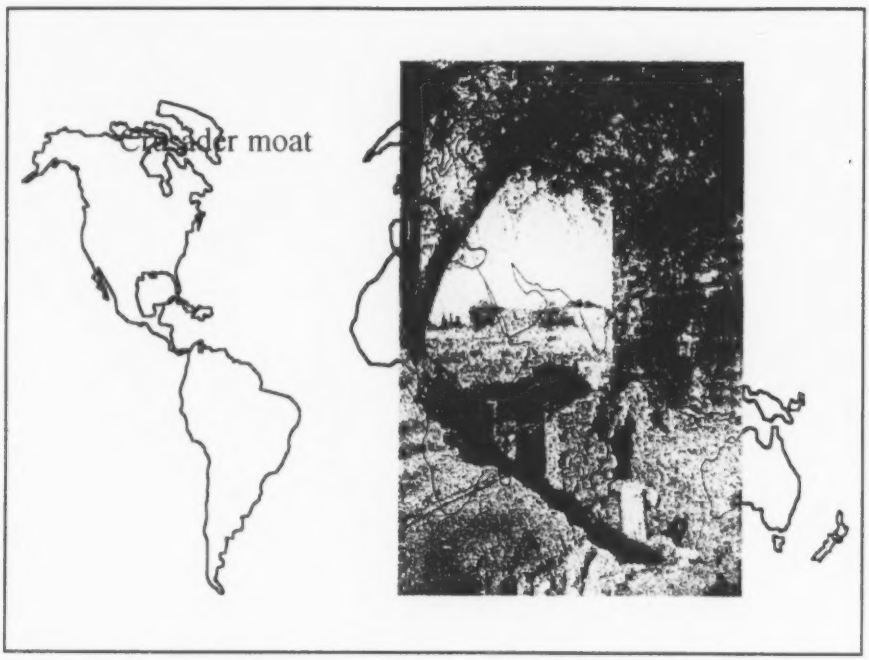
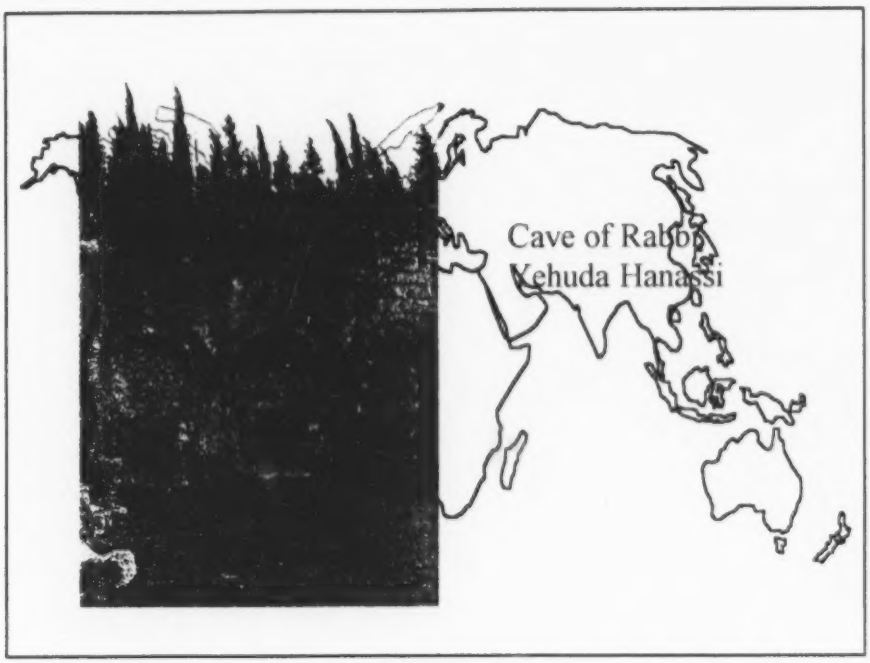
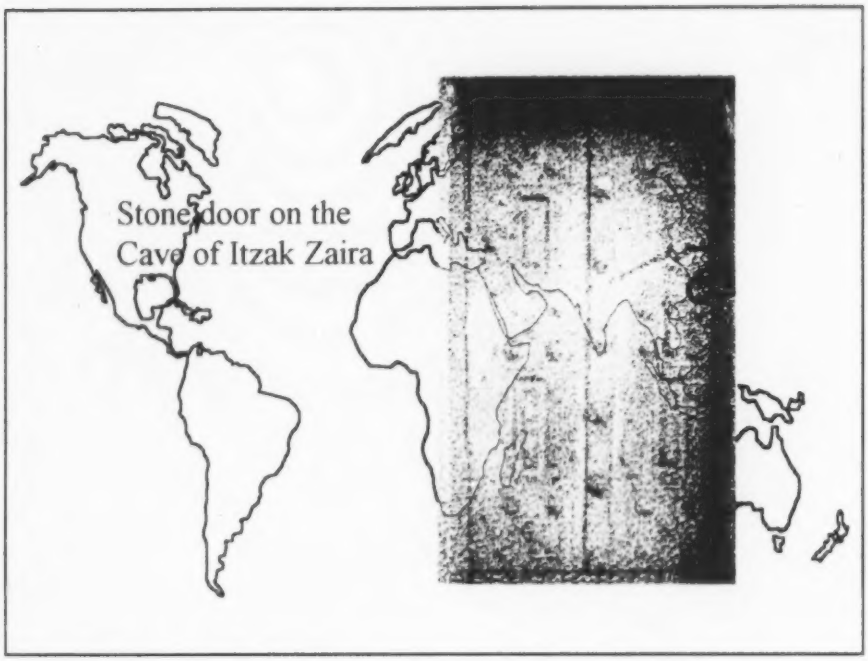



Remains of a Crusader fortress at Bet-She'an. It was surrounded by a wall and a moat.

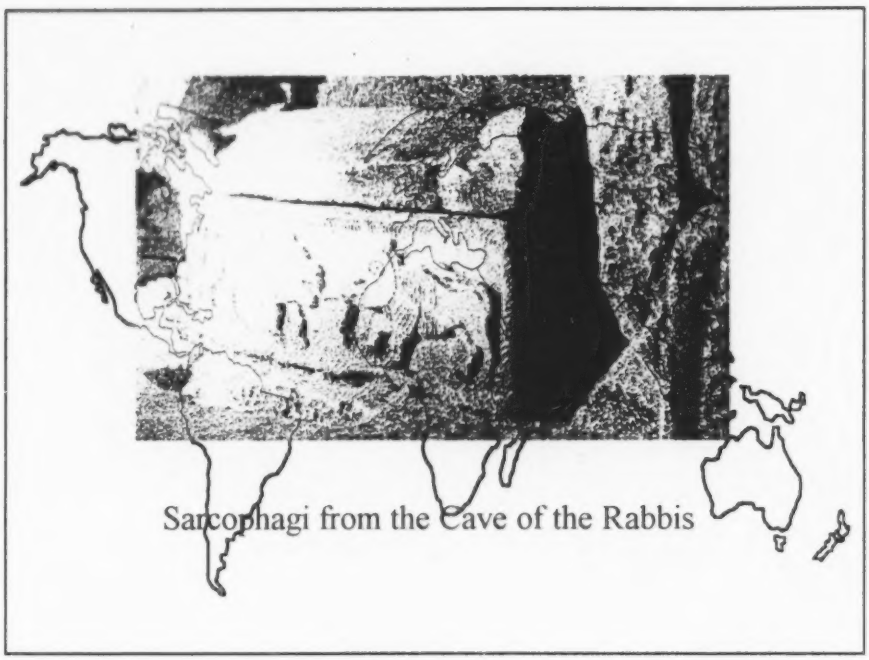



Bet She'arim is located in Lower Galilee within the city limits of the town of Keryat Tivon. Discovered at this site were the remains of an ancient Jewish city built on the hill and an underground Jewish cemetery dug into its slopes.

During the Second Temple period, (37-70 CE), Bet She'arim was one of many small Jewish settlements in Lower Galilee. Bet She'arim was destroyed by Roman soldiers in about 351 CE. Its catacombs were the main Jewish cemetery in the Holy Land and abroad during the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th centuries CE. Others were buried here until at least the 5th century - maybe the 6th.



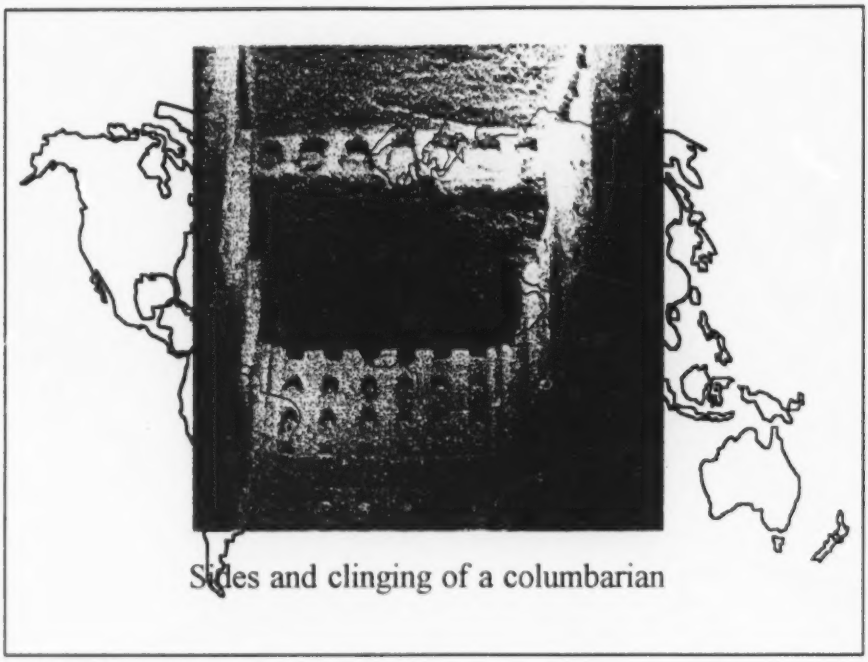

In the 19th century a small Arab village was located here. The first archaeological excavations were in 1871 with further excavations from 1936-1940 and 1953-1957.



Sarcophagi from the Cave of the Rabbis

Unearthed at the site were the remains of a synagogue, public buildings, a religious school, dwelling houses, city walls, a gate, and an olive oil plant, all dating to the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th centuries CE.

In addition, more than 30 burial caves were excavated.



Sides and clinging of a columbarian

Maresha and Bet Guvrin are two ancient cities that were located in the basin of the Guvrin Stream. During the Persian period after the Destruction of the First Temple, Maresha and all of southern Judea was settled by the Edomites, who came from the southwest. At the end of that period (in the 4th century BCE), Sidonians and Greeks came to Maresha bringing the Hellenistic culture. In addition, a few Egyptians and Jews lived there.

Maresha was conquered by the Hasmoneans around 113 BCE. It was demolished by the Parthian Army in 40 BCE.

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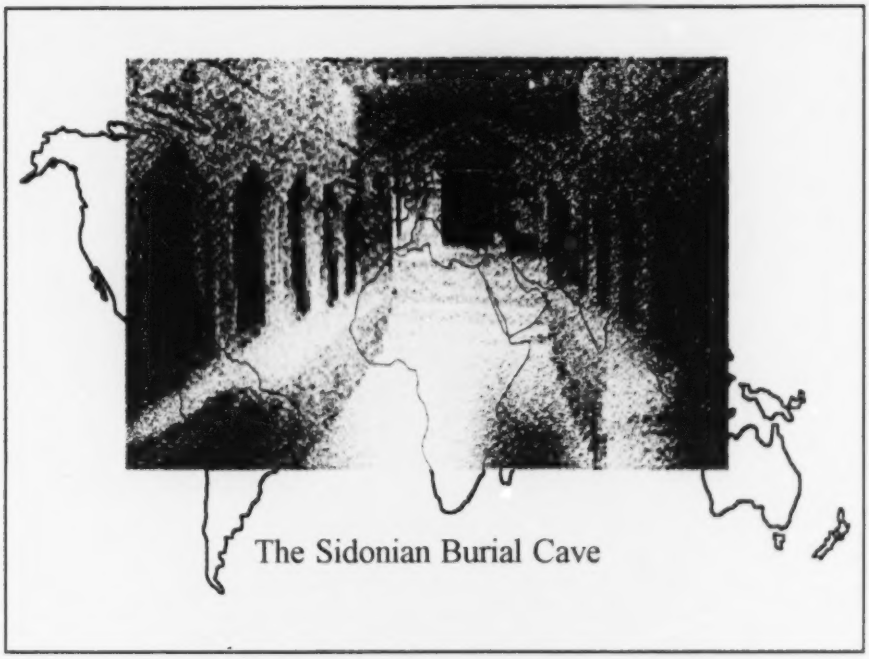
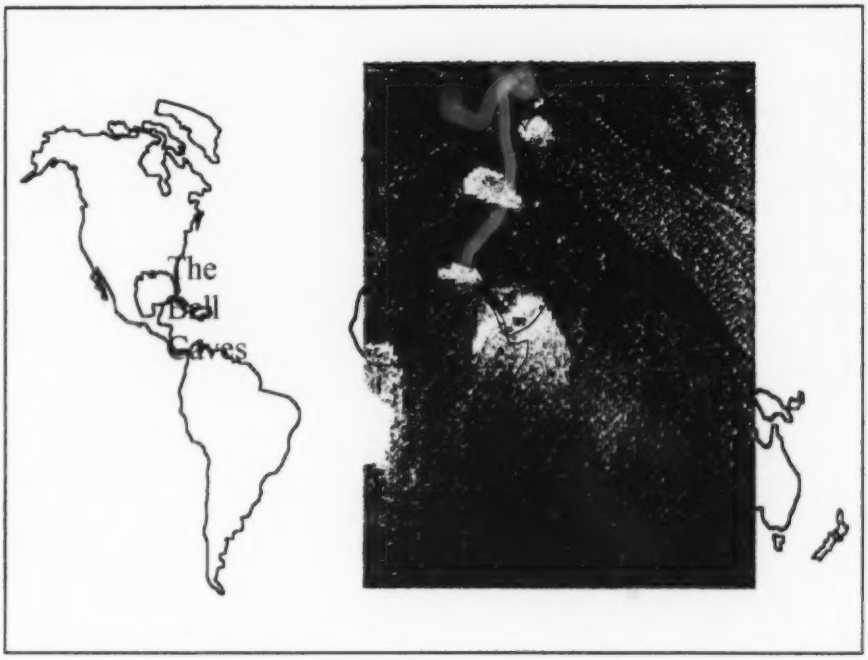


The Sidonian Burial Cave

Bet Guvrin is mentioned for the first time in ancient literature in 68 CE as one of the towns captured by the Roman general Vespasian. Following the destruction of the Second Temple (70 CE), it continued to exist as a crowded Jewish settlement.

Five highways, all marked with milestones, led to the city from various directions.

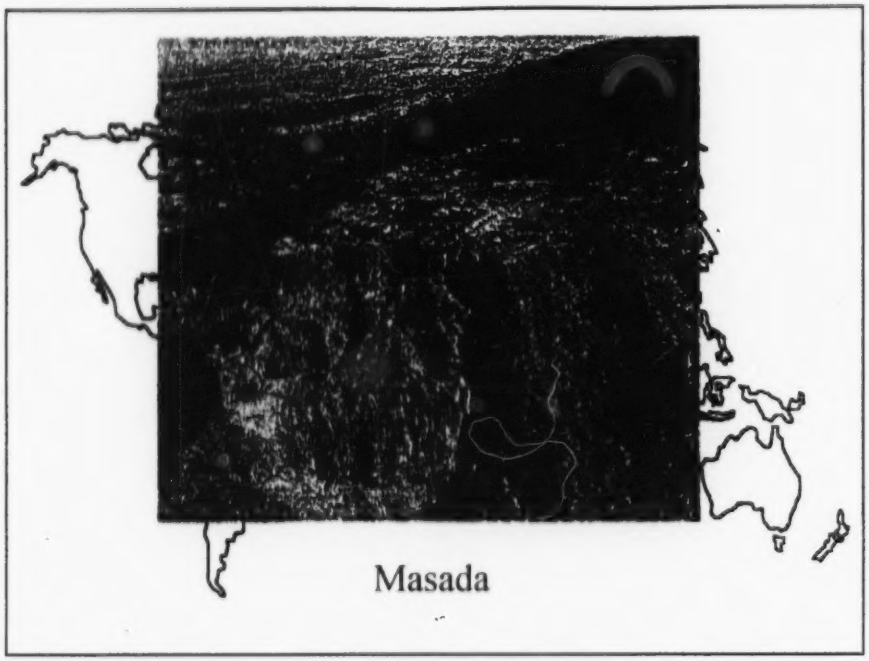
From the Roman period (70-324 CE), a large Jewish cemetery and remains of buildings were discovered. During the Byzantine period, Bet Guvrin was an important center of Christianity with a number of churches.




Most of the Bell Caves were dug during the early Muslim period (638-1099 CE)

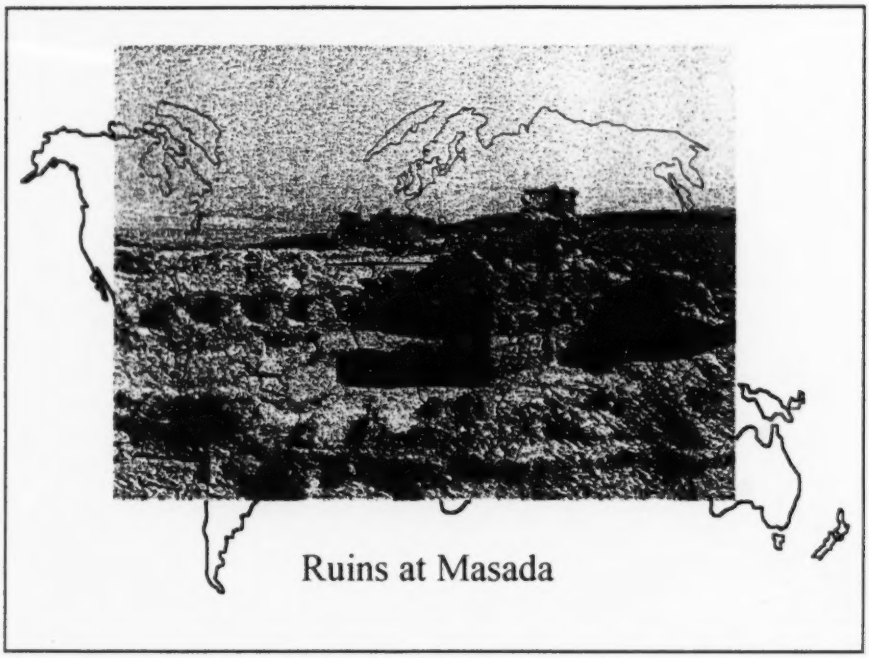
An Arab village occupied the site until Israel's War for Independence in 1948. In May 1949, Kibbutz Bet-Guvrin was established on its site.

Initial excavations began in 1900. Extensive excavations and research have been going on since 1989.



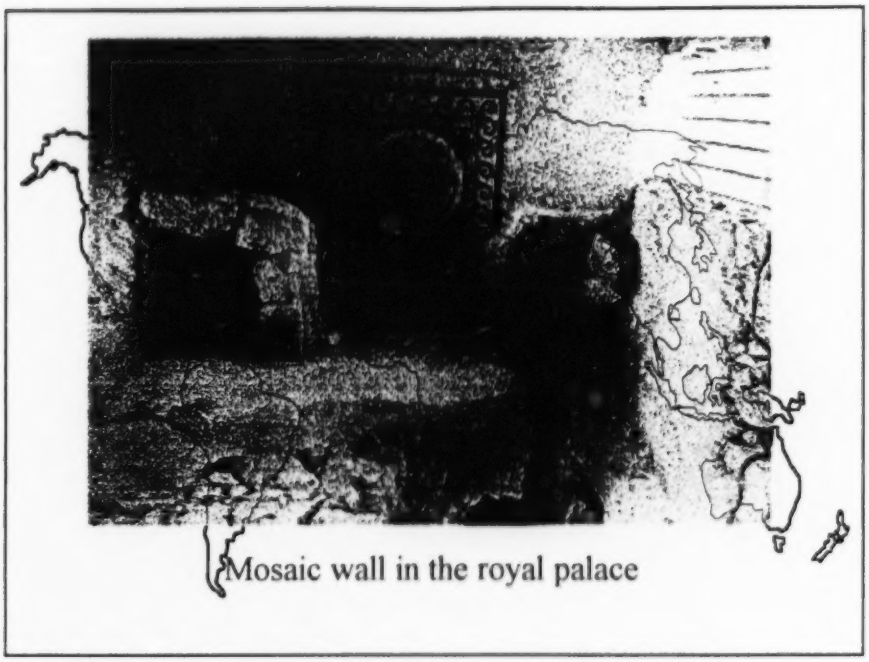
Masada

Just west of Israel's Dead Sea is a rock that rises 1,300 feet above the desert floor. On top of this plateau is Masada, the remains of a fortress built by King Herod beginning in 37 CE. The entire plateau was surrounded by a wall reinforced with 37 towers.



Ruins at Masada

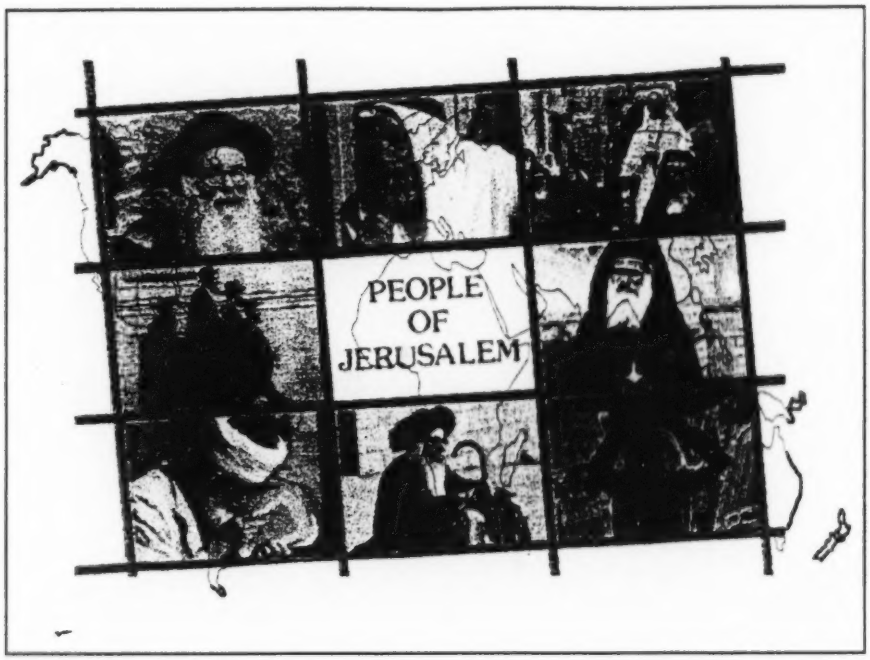
Inside were a three-tiered palace, an arsenal, lodgings for 1000 soldiers, and an ample water supply, thanks to huge underground tanks filled with rain. The vast area of the plateau was cultivated, and the food grown was preserved and stored in large covered warehouses.



Mosaic wall in the royal palace

Masada was captured by Jewish rebels in 66 CE. These Jews refused to surrender to the Romans after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE.

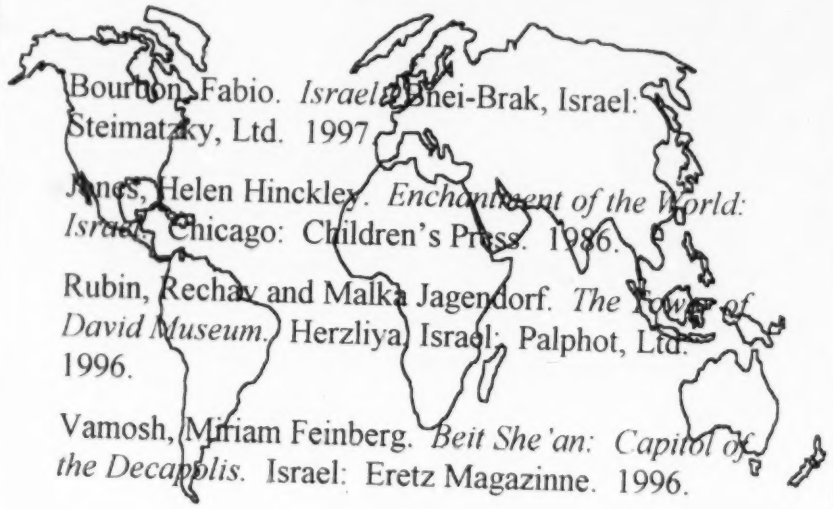
In 73 CE Flavius Silva's Roman army surrounded Masada. Four years later the Roman soldiers opened a breach in the wall of the fortress. The next day when the Romans entered Masada they found 960 dead. All of the Jewish inhabitants of Masada preferred to commit suicide rather than surrender to the Roman soldiers.




This ends our historical journey through Israel, a tiny piece of land where over a hundred different ethnic groups live together.

Jews and Muslims, Syrians, Lebanese, Egyptians, and Iraqis live here. There are desert Bedouins and there are Christians from all over the world, including Ethiopian Copts, Maronites, Armenians, and American Mormons. Kurds, Druse, Circassians, Karaites, Samarians, and even the Vietnamese "boat people" call Israel home.

## Resources

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